

BOARD OF TRADE ARTICLE

Dave Hill found this article in the September 1980 *"Philatelic Journal of Great Britain"*, editor Dr.Robert Wiggins.

The Board of Trade Perfins

"The illustrated letter sheet left London on 26 April 1871, addressed to Genoa where it was backstamped four days later. Sixpence was paid in cash and the one penny plate 129 paid the late fee.

This adhesive is perforated with the Crown over B.T. for Board of Trade.

Such official records as we have been able to consult state that all stamps current between 27th January 1882 and 14th May 1904

used in the Department were so perforated. Such stamps known to us prior to the 1884 issue are

	Issued
2d blue plate 15	21-8-1876
2½d blue plate 21	23-3-1881
1/- orange (wmk. Crown) plate 13	29-5-1881
1½d Venetian red	14-10-1880
1d lilac 16 dots	12-12-1881

The fact that the one penny plate 129 was used in 1871 is normal as the plate was put to press on 10-5-1869, being known used from 23-5-69. However, one is forced to the conclusion that someone, lacking the facts concerning this official perfin, had removed the stamp from the cover, fraudulently perforated the initials and replaced the stamp.

The famous forger, Fournier, left a quantity of Great Britain with forged B.T. perfins and it is possible that this example was made by him. Can any reader show us a Board of Trade cover bearing one of the genuine perfins?"



John Nelson, our member who is endeavouring to make sense of the Board of Trade forgery theory, would welcome comment about this article with particular reference to the conclusions reached by the writer of the article.

A second question which he is hoping can be answered, perhaps by some postal historian in the membership, concerns the forger Fournier. Can anyone give more information about Fournier as John has not previously seen a reference to any named forger in connection with Board of Trade perfins.

The cachet at the bottom of the letter sheet is that of Ippolito Leonino & Co., Merchants, 3 Copthall Court, London EC. It would appear to be addressed to one of the family members in Genoa, Italy. I am not aware of what type of goods is covered by the term 'Merchant' in relation to Leonino but the thought crossed my mind that they could have been carrying on some trade connected with Government contracts and the Board of Trade were involved. Pure guess work on my part.

If you have information or comment please send to John Nelson, 69 Aperfield Road, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent TN1 6 3LX.

Continuing on the subject of Board of Trade forgeries on cover, John Nelson writes: .

Patrick Frost, joint managing director of Argyll Etkin, has kindly allowed me to inspect two items from his Company's fakes and forgeries collection. They are entires on deep blue paper from which it has been impossible to make sufficiently clear photocopies to illustrate here.

Both are stereotyped letters produced by the British Linen Company Bank to facilitate the transmission of Scotch cheques by agents (managers) of the Bank from one branch to another. Both are addressed to the agent of the bank at Golspie, the earlier, from the agent at Greenock, is dated 31st December, 1889 and bears a QV 1d lilac. The other, from the agent at Tain, is dated 22nd July 1892 and bears a pair of QV ½d vermilion Jubilees. All three stamps are perforated (Crown)/B.T and on one of the ½d Jubilees the die is reversed. The die is number 11 in my classification, illustrated in Bulletin 294, Page 25.

There is nothing to suggest that the communications had any connection with the business of the Board of Trade and it is difficult to imagine circumstances in which their perfins could have properly been used to pay the postage. The entires must accordingly be viewed with suspicion. Mr. Frost has expressed the opinion that the Jubilee pair (and by implication the 1d lilac) have been soaked off, perforated with a forged die and reaffixed.

I must say that they are the best indication I have yet seen that bogus Board of Trade material may have been produced. On the other hand, what exactly were the two entires, their subject matter exclusively concerned the routine business of a Scottish Bank, but bearing Board of Trade perfins, supposed to be? If they were fraudulent attempts to create Board of Trade official covers they are nothing short of a joke.

As with the Leonino letter sheet mentioned above, members are asked for their comments and opinions.

2/48
90

B.T.
PERFIN →



The Agent

British Linen Company Bank

Service 78

Golspie

2/46
80



The Agent

British Linen Company Bank

Service 76

Golspie

British Linen Company Bank

GREENOCK 31 Dec 1884

The Agent for
The British Linen Company.
Glasgow

Sir,

I enclose for credit of this Branch with the Head Office
Scotch Cheques amounting as per slip attached to £4 6/-
and bills as per list annexed.

Please acknowledge receipt in course.
Four & County Bank Ltd £4 6/-

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant.
William Hill, Esq Agent.